

Paper Crowns

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Paper Crowns

by [Spookys House of Fanfic](#)

Summary

Being a single dad is hard. It's hard, and nobody understands.

(However, your son's cute teacher might make it all worthwhile.)

Being a single dad is hard.

Dream knows this first-hand. Ever since Tubbo was born, he had almost no time for anything but the boy. Not to blame his child, of course -- Tubbo was the light of his life, and he wouldn't trade him for anything.

Sure, getting pregnant right out of highschool was less than ideal. And yeah, maybe he was staying in a tiny apartment with barely any money to spend after basic necessities. And okay, it was hell to juggle a job, college courses, and a toddler. But right now, Tubbo was his everything. And if his social life suffered a bit, so what? Family was more important in the end.

And if he ever wished that the other father was in the picture, he squished that thought down. He had kept his pregnancy a secret for a reason. It wasn't his place to call overseas and drag his former boyfriend away from that University he had gotten into for a child that the two of them had never planned. He wouldn't do it, no matter how much he missed the shorter man.

So yeah, being a single dad was hell, but Dream is pretty sure that he's made a solid routine of it. With a combination of online classes and his programming job allowing him to work from home, he can make sure that Tubbo is taken care of at all times without having to hire a babysitter. It's nice, really. He can do his work with the boy asleep in his lap, which is both enjoyable and responsible parenting. It's a win-win.

Of course, there is *one* downside:

When Tubbo is finally old enough to go to preschool, the boy is so attached to him that Dream has a hard time prying him from his hip.

Now, Tubbo has always been a fairly calm child. But when Dream finally manages to get him into the building, the poor boy *cries* and Dream almost takes him home then and there. He has to stay strong, though -- this is for the good of his child, no matter how much it may hurt.

Unlike some preschools, this one doesn't allow for parents to sit in the classroom. That's actually something Dream had actively sought out -- He wouldn't be able to stay anyways, and he didn't want Tubbo to feel like he was the only person being abandoned. The brunet looks around, trying to find the teacher.

As it turns out, though, the teacher finds him first.

A taller man dressed in a simple white shirt and pants approaches him. Dream looks up from his crying toddler and...

Oh shit, this guy is *hot*. He's got light pink hair pulled back into a ponytail, and red eyes look down at them. Is *this* the teacher? Or, considering the blond boy in his arms, is this another parent? Dream doesn't know, but he gives an apologetic smile.

"Sorry," he says. "C'mon, Tubbo, it'll be okay! You're going to have so much fun here, I promise! You'll make so many friends, and I'll be back before you know it!" Crying starts to taper off into sniffles. Whether it's because of the prospect of fun or because Tubbo simply has no

more tears to shed, he doesn't know.

"I'll take care of him," the taller man says, placing the child in his arms on the ground, and hoo boy, *what a voice*. Dream nods.

"Thank you," he says, standing up. He ruffles his son's hair, gently nudging him towards the other boy. The blond, thankfully, seems to be way more friendly than his own son. With any luck, he'll bring Tubbo out of his shell.

Tubbo and the boy (whose name he now knows is Tommy) become best friends. Which, as it turns out, means playdates, and in turn, spending time with Techno, Tommy's caretaker.

Dream was right in assuming that the pink-haired man was the teacher. He was a good one, too -- constantly giving updates on each child to their parents at pickup. It was nice, being able to hear about what his son had been doing in his absence. It made him feel better to know that Tubbo was okay.

But, back to the point.

When coming up with locations for the boys to spend time, they were very limited. A lot of places were out of the question due to a lack of money, and while Dream's apartment was clean, it was also small, and he was a bit embarrassed to show it to a total stranger. So, their go-to location became the park.

The playdates would go like this:

Dream and Techno would meet up. They'd exchange quick greetings, let their children play, and then sit down on some benches to watch over their children and talk.

Through this, Dream learned that Tommy was Techno's brother, not his son. However, due to his other brother having a child of his own, the pink-haired man had moved back in with his father to help take care of the boy after certain events made such a thing unavoidable. So, in a way, the other was a single parent too, even if he had a lot more of a support network.

That's not to say that Dream didn't -- His family had been disappointed, yes, but they were also supportive both financially and in his choice to keep the child. And sure, they didn't understand why he wouldn't just contact his ex to get child support, but that wasn't as important. Hell, they had even helped pay for his tuition so that he could continue his education. So yeah, he had a support network of his own.

"What do you think?" The other asks, snapping him out of his thoughts. Dream laughs nervously.

"Sorry, I zoned out. What was the question?"

Techno rolls his eyes, though not rudely.

"I said that since it's getting colder, we should probably find other places to meet up."

Oh no.

"Yeah, that's probably true," he says, trying not to let his anxiety show in his voice. "Where did you have in mind?"

Techno, thankfully, keeps quiet on any thoughts he might have at seeing Dream's less-than-impressive apartment.

Which is good, because he's starting to realize that his desire to impress the other man may be in part to a minor crush on the man.

But how can he not? The pink-haired man is attractive, good with kids, and has a good sense of humor. He doesn't ask questions, and he sure as hell doesn't give Dream the judgemental glances that others do upon seeing the young man with a child. He's also the only person that Dream has been consistently talking to.

(And if his old friends wonder why he never met up with them in person after they moved for college, they sure as hell never said anything.)

So yeah, a crush was unavoidable.

Except when he realizes that his yearning for his ex has turned into dreams of pink hair, he realizes that he's probably in way too deep.

Well, apparently, Dream is way too obvious about his feelings, because even the children have picked up on it. How? He doesn't know.

What he *does* know is that one day, he's picking up his darling son from preschool. Tubbo all but tackles his legs (as usual), and he's ready to hear Techno's review of the day when he notices a paper crown on the other's head.

"Nice hat," he teases, and the other rolls his eyes.

"Thanks, Tubbo gave it to me."

"Oh, did you?" He ruffles the boy's hair, and his son giggles.

"Yeah! Because he's your prince charming!"

It takes all of Dream's willpower not to turn bright red.

"Prince Charming, huh?" Techno teases him at the boys' next playdate.

"I have no idea what he's talking about," the brunet replies, trying once again not to turn bright red.

“Oh? Well, if that’s the case, then I guess I shouldn’t be asking if you wanted to see a show with me, huh?”

Dream freezes.

“I mean,” he starts, trying to keep his voice even. “If you *insist*. I’d have to find a babysitter, though.” Which would honestly be the hardest part.

“I can leave them with my brother,” Techno offers, and Dream feels an instant wave of relief hit him. There’s that taken care of.

“Well, then what show would we be seeing?”

“That’s up to you,” is the response.

They end up going to see the Shrek Musical, and it’s the greatest time Dream’s had in years.

(And if he gets a kiss goodnight on the first date, that’s nobody’s business.)

Months come and go, and before Dream knows it, it’s the middle of December. He and Techno have been spending more and more time together, both with and without the boys. It’s nice, Dream thinks, to have someone like this. Maybe if things keep up, Tubbo will have a second father after all.

The thought makes him want to squeal like a teenage girl.

Right now, Dream is getting ready to go to some family Christmas party with his boyfriend. While he’s met Techno’s brother, he’s still a bit nervous to meet the rest of the family for the first time. What will they think of him?

While he’s waiting for the other to pick him up, his phone buzzes. He goes to check it, and almost

does a double take when he sees the name of one of his high school friends.

George came back for the holidays, so we're meeting up. Can you make it?

Years ago, this message would have made him have a breakdown. He would have had a crisis, wondering if he should or shouldn't go. But now?

Now, as he hears a knock on the door, he doesn't even hesitate before telling them he's made other plans.

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